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THE MONTHLY GULL BULLETIN

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A Swallow Community

About twenty-five miles south of Salt Lake City, Utah, the Jordan River cuts through some thirty-five or forty feet of old lake sediment. In a river bend where the wash keeps a rather steep face to this dirt cliff, I found a very interesting community of swallows.

About ten feet below the top is a sand seam two or three inches wide, along which some fifty Bank Swallows had burrowed. These burrows could hardly have been lined or spaced better if measured by calipers along a chalked line.

Above this row of Bank Swallows' burrows and extending to within a foot or two of the top of the cliff were scattered burrows numbering another fifty or more, in which I identified Rough-winged Swallows.

To the north side of these burrows and above the north end of the Bank Swallows' burrows hung a cluster of fourteen Cliff Swallow nests.

These colonies were found in July, 1930, and the swallows in the vicinity were numerous. I did not visit here again until late in July of 1933, when I found conditions different. The swallows had departed with the exception of three or four pairs of Rough-winged and Cliff Swallows, no Bank Swallows being observed.

The Cliff Swallows had added several small clusters and had increased their number of nests from fourteen in 1930 to fifty-five in 1933. The Rough-winged Swallow territory seemed unimpaired, but the Bank Swallows fared ill for the sand seam had either caved out or been dug out by malicious persons, as only a few large burrows were left and into these I saw English Sparrows entering.

Openin' of the Ole Swimmin' Hole

The winter of 1932-33 was a very hard one on birds around Salt Lake City. Heavy snowfalls continued from the first week in November and throughout the winter. Bare spots, except on steep sun-facing hillsides, were not in evidence until February 15.

I happened into Memory Grove, which is situated in the north central part of the city and at the mouth of City Creek Canyon, during the first part of the breaking up of winter. Here I saw House Sparrows flying up and down the canyon. This incident alone was noteworthy and I soon discovered the attraction. About one-half mile up the canyon the bushes were full of water-soaked birds, Linnets, Juncos, Gambel and House Sparrows. Wind, sun and creek had effected a small opening through the snow and ice some three feet across and fortunately over a shallow gravel shoal, and here the birds had come to bathe.

Tragedy in a Linnet Family

Early in May, 1933, in Mount Olivet Cemetery, Salt Lake City, I noticed a pair of Linnets demolishing a last-year Oriole's nest and carrying the detached

material to a nearby spruce tree where all was lost to view in the thickness of the foliage. At later dates I failed to find the Linnets, nor was I able to flush a bird by moving the branches, so concluded the nest must have been abandoned.

Months later, when the leaves had fallen, Mrs. Lockerbie noticed something like a bird hanging from the Oriole's nest. It was the nest which I had seen the Linnets destroying in the spring for their own, and with a horsehair about its neck hung the male Linnet.

Curlew and Hawk

On May 5, 1934, while watching some shore birds near what is locally known as Copper Lakes, Salt Lake Valley, I heard the pealing alarm screams of a Long-billed Curlew high overhead. I thought the altitude unusual but gave it little more thought. My companion, Mrs. Elizabeth Hansen, however, continued to watch it and soon discovered its high purpose. A Ferruginous Rough-Legged Hawk with wings set was sailing toward the Curlew's home site, though at considerable elevation. The Curlew kept rising and when over the Hawk made a vicious drive at it. The Hawk swerved to avoid the attacks, which were repeated many times, until it was well out of the Curlew territory.

Gray-headed Grebes

On May 20, 1934, while walking on the Lucien Cutoff across Great Salt Lake I saw three Grebes with gray heads, which puzzled me for a time. They were not fifty feet from me, in favorable light, and I had the assistance of 8 x glasses, yet I did not solve the matter until I was within ten feet of one of them. They were male Eared Grebes in full breeding plumage and their fluffy nuptial head adornment was crusted with salt crystals that could either have resulted from drying after diving or been deposited in the feathers from a salt-laden wind; hence the gray-headed appearance.

(The above notes were contributed by C. W. Lockerbie, Salt Lake City, Utah.)

Book Notice: "A Field Guide to the Birds," by Roger Tory Peterson. Giving field marks of all species found in Eastern North America. Text and illustrations in color and also in black and white. Publishers, Houghton, Mifflin Company. Price, $2.75.

Some Interesting Items

A flock of at least twelve Yellow Warblers was seen at the Chain of Lakes, Golden Gate Park, by Commander and Mrs. Parmenter, September 26th, and for five or six days thereafter; seen also by Mr. and Mrs. Stephens on October 2nd, and several seen by Miss Christine Danz on October 6th.

Two Warbling Vireos and several Lutescent Warblers were observed on October 5th, at the Chain of Lakes, by Mr. and Mrs. Stephens.

On October 12th, a Burrowing Owl flew in the kitchen window of the home of Mr. John W. Mailliard, at Vallejo and Gough Streets, San Francisco, a strange place to find a Burrowing Owl.

On October 21st, a Cooper Hawk perched for about ten minutes on a chimney at Filbert and Gough Streets, observed by Mr. and Mrs. Stephens.

On October 23rd, Mrs. C. S. S. Dutton flushed a Poor-will while birding in the Presidio; this is the second record we know of for San Francisco, the other being at Lake Merced, April 20, 1929.

A hybrid Mallard (whitish) with a family of five brownish and three yellowish ducklings about two days old seen on Stow Lake, October 27th, by Mr. and Mrs. Stephens.

The unusually large number of Red Phalaropes this season in our park lakes and everywhere along the coast from Salmon Creek, Sonoma County, to Point Lobos, Monterey County, is indeed quite noteworthy. A few were observed first at Chain of Lakes, October 12th, and from that time in ever-increasing numbers at various locations, being probably most numerous about October 25th, when at least 6,000 were seen at Dumbarton bridge. Heavy storms at sea just prior to their appearance seem to be the explanation of this interesting occurrence.

October Field Trip was taken on Sunday, the 14th, to Lake Merced with twelve members and one guest. The party met at the entrance to Fleishhacker playground, then proceeded to the duck pond to observe the Mandarin and Wood Ducks. From here the party continued through the eucalyptus grove (where a list of ten species was noted) to the smaller lake.

Upon arriving at the lake, we were pleased to see that conditions were still favorable for such species as Grebes, Tule Wrens, Yellow-throats, Rail, Bittern and Herons. Fox and Song Sparrows as well as Blackbirds also seemed to find conditions to their liking.

After luncheon the party circled the larger lake, where, on previous trips, many interesting species have been noted. Now, on account of the removal of so much shrubbery and the presence of a skeet club, scarcely a bird is to be found except those which find shelter in the tules.

The ravine which leads down from Junipero Serra Boulevard to the larger lake is now a barren waste. One cannot but feel sad as one looks upon the devastation of what was once a perfect bird sanctuary.

On the return trip along the east shore of the lake, one of the party gazing skyward suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, look!" There was a flock of silvery white birds at an altitude of about five hundred feet. They had all the appearance of Bonaparte Gulls and seemed to be executing a sort of aerial drill as they banked and turned, finally wheeling about, as Gulls do when preparing to migrate, and then disappearing from sight.

Members attending were: Messrs. and Mesdames Millard and Stephens; Mesdames Cummings, Strock; Misses Danz, Papina; Messrs. Bryant, Chase, Power, C. R. Thomas; Guest, Mr. Strock.

A list of forty-five species was noted:

Eared Grebe	Red Phalarope	Lutescent Warbler
Western Grebe	Northern Phalarope	Audubon Warbler
Pied-billed Grebe	Glaucous-winged Gull	Yellow-throat
Farallon Cormorant	Western Gull	English Sparrow
Great Blue Heron	California Gull	Red-winged Blackbird
Mallard	Bonaparte Gull	Tricolored Red-wing
Baldpate	Anna Hummingbird	Brewer Blackbird
Canvas-back	Red-shafted Flicker	House Finch
Ruddy Duck	Black Phoebe	Willow Goldfinch
Marsh Hawk	Chickadee	Spotted Towhee
Sparrow Hawk	Bush-tit	Junco
California Quail	Bewick Wrén	Nuttall Sparrow
Sora Rail	Tule Wren	Fox Sparrow
American Coot	Hermit Thrush	Golden-crowned Sparrow
Wilson Snipe	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Song Sparrow

Charles A. Bryant, Leader and Historian.

Audubon Notes

November Meeting: The regular meeting will be held on Thursday, the 8th, at 8 p. m., room 19, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be Dr. Alden H. Miller, Associate Professor of Zoology, University of California, who will speak on "Making Acquaintance with Some British Columbia Birds."

November Field Trip will be taken on Sunday, the 11th, starting from Ross, Marin County. Buy round-trip ticket 60c, and take 8:15 a. m. Sausalito Ferry. In case of heavy rain, trip will be taken the following Sunday. Leader, Joseph J. Webb.

"Birds of Marin County," published by the Audubon Association of the Pacific, giving a complete list of the birds found in Marin County, may be obtained from the leader. Price, 25c.

October Meeting: The 207th regular meeting was held on October 11th, at 8 p. m., room 19, Ferry Building with twenty-nine members and guests present. President Webb presided.

The following observations were reported:

B. C. Bremer: September 15th, Golden Gate Park, Black-throated Gray Warbler.

Mrs. L. W. Cummings: September 16th, Manzanita, American Egret.

Mrs. G. Earle Kelly: October 9th, Alameda, Winter Wren.

Vincent Mowbray: October 2nd, San Mateo, Audubon Warbler; 5th, Cedar Waxwings; perched on San Mateo Bridge, Lewis Woodpecker.

Commander Parmenter: September 19th, Bolinas, 15 Band-tailed Pigeons; Olema marsh, White-tailed Kite, Golden Eagle, Pigeon Hawk; Bodega Canyon two Ferruginous Rough-legged Hawks; 28th, Cliff House, 84 Black Turnstones; October 4th, San Mateo Bridge, seven Knots, 58 Avocets; 9th, Olema marsh, Pectoral Sandpiper; Bolinas, Western Flycatcher.

Mrs. Stephens: October 2nd, Chain of Lakes, Dwarf Hermit-Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet; 5th, Fox and Golden-crowned Sparrows.

Mrs. G. Earle Kelly must agree with Emerson that one brings back from travel what one takes, for her advice to a person going to study birds in an unfamiliar territory is to know your home birds well. Make a point of recognizing the different bird by knowing one's own well. There is such a close similarity between certain species that one cannot mistake, for instance, the eastern species if one knows the western well; an example is the Snowy Plover of the Pacific Coast and the Piping Plover of the Atlantic. In some cases it is the call or song that differentiates the two species as the Western and Eastern Meadowlark. Study maps well before arriving to know the topography of the country, its river courses, bluffs, etc., its City and National Parks.

Mrs. Kelly read Audubon's notes on his experience of the New Madrid earthquake of 1811, before she visited the area. She told how the country had been changed by the earthquake, the Reelfoot River dammed up, making the Reelfoot Lake of the present day. The subsequent change in the bird life followed the change in the topography of the country. One is stimulated to study geography as well as bird life after listening to Mrs. Kelly.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

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For the Study and the Protection of Birds

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Members are responsible for dues until written notice of resignation is received by Treasurer.